



The Outlook

January 5, 2009

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We will be closely watching these incoming storm systems and their impact on the various growing regions and keep you up to date as we gather more information.

Weather/Supply Outlook

Cool days along with cold overnight temperatures will continue in the desert growing regions early this week with a warming trend expected by mid-week. Overnight low temperatures in the High 20s to mid 30s (28-35) were recorded throughout the Southwestern desert regions this weekend and again this morning. Morning frosts (lettuce ice) will delay harvests in the coldest desert locations today and tomorrow in front of a warming trend beginning on Wednesday. Temperatures are expected to rebound to seasonal norms with overnight temperatures remaining above critical levels (above 35) into next week. A couple of Pacific storm systems approaching California look to remain to the North, bringing a cool down and a very slight chance of showers to Southern California and the Desert growing regions. Light to moderate blister, epidermal peel, feathering and frost discoloration are likely to rise due to recent cold temps affecting certain stands in the coldest locations. Frost damage remains spotty in these desert fields with approximately 20-30% reported to have been impacted at this time. The warm up expected mid-week will increase growth rates in these fields that remain ahead of normal harvesting schedules. Overall quality, texture and shelf life will be on the rise next week in the warmer temperatures. Supplies however will remain on the light side for a few weeks with shortages possible as crops rebound in the warmer temperatures. These possible supply gaps will vary by shipper and field location with upcoming demand playing a major role as to the severity of shortfalls.

The new year (January) is always the most challenging time of year for desert area growers. The changing weather patterns and ground temperatures along with the switch to emerging cold weather seed varieties and the ever present labor difficulties provide a major challenge for quality and supply consistency.